Lovely Strange Dark

ULTRABAROQUE DEPROGRAMMER

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CHAPTER 2

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CHAPTER 2 BLINDED EXODUS 2

I REMEMBER.
I'M A DEPRO-GRAMMER.
WHIPP

JUST ?
I'M SANE. I WON'T ACT UP OR ANYTHING. JUST ——
YOU'VE HEARD OF DEPRO-GRAMMERS, RIGHT?
His voice...!
This voiceprint is letting me recover.
YOUR SYSTEM WILL REBOOT
ONCE YOU COME ACROSS THE SAME VOICEPRINT AS MINE,

pat pat
drag
HEY,
YOU SAID YOUR NAME'S SORACHAI, RIGHT?
COULD YOU TALK TO ME SOME MORE —— WAIT!
twist
WAIT! DON'T GO!
I MEAN, YOU WOKE UP THE GUY THAT THE DOCTORS COULDN'T, RIGHT?
IF YOU'RE WORRIED, YOU CAN LEAVE MY RESTRAINTS ON.
CAN'T YOU WAIT JUST A BIT TO REPORT?
FUMF!
IT'S KHOB KHUN KRAB, RIGHT? "THANK YOU" IN THAI?

WHERE I AM?
IN JAPAN, RIGHT?
THIS IS ST. AUGUSTINE HOSPITAL
AHAHA. WE'RE IN TOKYO
SO, SORA-CHAI, MIND TELLING ME
I WAS TOLD YOU WERE BROUGHT HERE AFTER YOU COLLAPSED ON THE ROAD
THE NURSE SAID IT WAS SNOWING WHEN IT HAPPENED
It's blank— I don't have a single memory from around then
How badly was I damaged?
BUT DEPROGRAMMERS AND BRAINWASHERS

WHAT?
AREN'T THEY JUST THERAPIST KNOCK-OFFS THAT THE MEDIA DREAMED UP WAY BACK WHEN?
DO THEY REALLY EXIST?

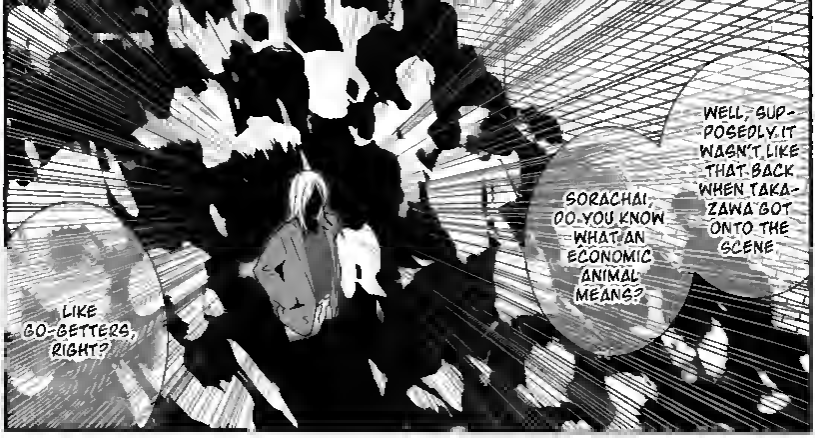
THEY ATTACK AND CRASH THEM LIKE HACKERS.
AND BRAIN-WASHING IS LIKE OVER-WRITING DATA, RIGHT?
IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT ANYONE CAN DO THAT

I'll have to adjust his attitude.
YOU THINK WE DON'T?

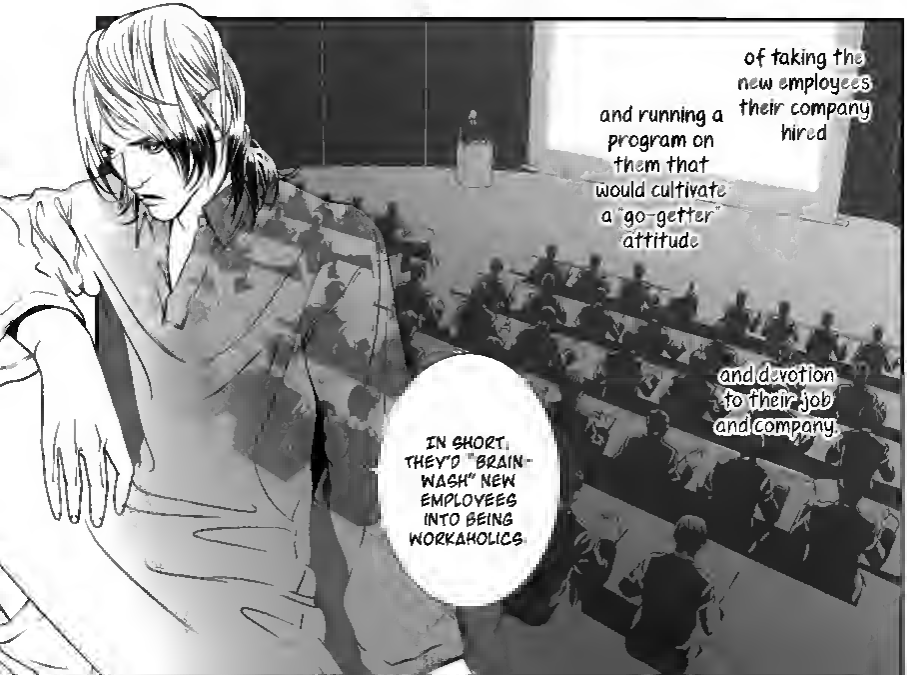
BUT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT PEOPLE'S MINDS!

He seems like some prodigy that's skipped ahead in school.
but a kid is a kid.
?
If I was my usual self, it'd be simple to replace the information he just gave me with a high resolution video
projected onto my retinas.
To regain myself.
Let's call this rehab
CHNK

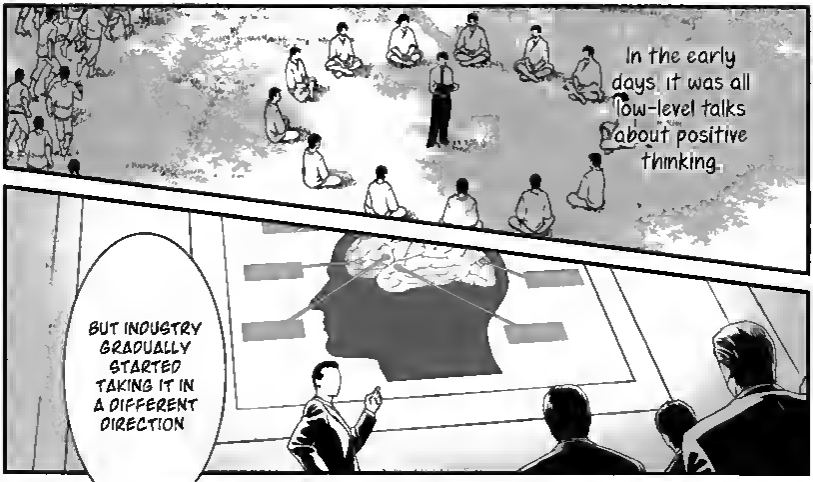
DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT. I'M NOT GOING TO LOSE IT.
KICK
AH!
TAKAZAWA IS THE NAME OF THE MAN YOU MIGHT CALL THE FOUNDER OF DEPROGRAMMING. HE'S NO LONGER ALIVE.
TAKA-ZAWA?
CALL ME TAKAZAWA HIDETO FOR NOW.
I CAN'T TELL YOU MY REAL NAME.
HE WAS KILLED.
NO WAY! SO IT'S LIKE A CRIMINAL UNDER-WORLD?


LIKE GO-GETTERS, RIGHT?
SORACHAI, DO YOU KNOW WHAT AN ECONOMIC ANIMAL MEANS?
WELL, SUPPOSEDLY IT WASN'T LIKE THAT BACK WHEN TAKAZAWA GOT ONTO THE SCENE

ORIGINALLY, "WASHERS" HAD THE JOB
Sniff
THIS KID MUST BE SURROUNDED BY OLD MEN TO LEARN THAT WORD.


IN SHORT, THEY'D "BRAIN-WASH" NEW EMPLOYEES INTO BEING WORKAHOLICS
and running a program on them that would cultivate a "go-getter" attitude
of taking the new employees their company hired
and devotion to their job and company

and what started as just two or three washers branched out again and again to form countless factions.
Over the course of ten years, the market for washers expanded.


In the early days, it was all low-level talks about positive thinking.
BUT INDUSTRY GRADUALLY STARTED TAKING IT IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION

AND THEN?
THEN WHAT?
SO?

SCRAPE

WHY'D THEY NEED TO DO THAT?
Basically,
it got to the point where people would ask for a mind influenced by company A
to be re-washed with a program from company B or for a mind running company C's program to be overwritten by company D's version.
TALENTED PEOPLE CAPABLE OF DEEP BRAIN-WASHING,
THE SO-CALLED GREEN BERETS OF THE MIND-SCAPE, WERE GATHERED FROM ALL ACROSS THE WORLD AND TRAINED
AND THUS ELITE BRAINWASHERS WERE CREATED.

THAT'S RIGHT, HEAD-HUNTING
BUT THE OPPOSING COMPANIES EACH HIRED DIFFERENT WASHERS TO DO THE JOB
YOU MEAN COMPANIES USED BRAINWASHING IN THEIR STRUGGLE TO GET THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST EMPLOYEES?

Wiggle Wiggle
!
THAT'S WHEN A NEW GROUP FORMED FROM WITHIN THE WASHERS AND THAT WAS—?

DEPRO-GRAM-MERS!
Slap
IT WAS DEPRO-GRAM-MERS!
YEAH, PROFES-SIONALS WHO UNDO BRAIN-WASHING.
DEPRO-GRAMMERS IDENTIFY THE PRO-GRAM
THAT WASHERS PUT IN PLACE AND DESTROY IT.
THUS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE OF RESETTING BRAINWASHED PEOPLE WAS BEGUN.

SO THAT THEY COULD HAVE COMPLETE CONTROL OVER THEM.
SO THE WASHERS DECIDED TO TRAIN THEIR OWN DEPROGRAMMERS
THE WASHERS THOUGHT THEY MIGHT ONE DAY BETRAY THEM AND DECONSTRUCT THEIR OWN MINDS.
THOUGH THEY WORKED DIFFERENTLY FROM WASHERS, THEIR SIMILARITIES INCITED PARANOIA.
AND THEY HAD THE ABILITY TO RECONSTRUCT EVEN STRONG MINDS.
THE DEPROGRAMMERS HAD COME FROM THE RANKS OF THE ELITE WASHERS,
FROM THERE THE STORY TURNS TO THE INDUSTRY'S DARKER SIDE.
WOW, THAT SOUNDS KINDA COOL!
WITHIN OUR MINDS.
THEY EMBEDDED A KEY CHIP
Others in my trade have also been seen writhing in agony
WHEN YOU HEAR THE KEY WORDS, YOU CANNOT DISOBEY.
THERE'S NO SUBSTANCE AND THEREFORE NOTHING TO FIND.
IT'S WORDS, NOT A DEVICE.
YOU AREN'T GOING TO SEE ANY OLD SCARS.
FLIP

We deprogrammers were trained up
with [illegible] mine built into our minds.
DEPROGRAMMERS ARE THE WASHERS' SLAVES, RIGHT!?
SO NOW
THAT'S... SLAVERY!

JUST A COUPLE MORE MINUTES AND HE'LL BE READY TO HUG ME
IS IT REALLY THIS EASY TO MANIPULATE A KID'S ATTITUDE?
THAT'S HORRIBLE..
THAT'S RIGHT, SOMEONE REALIZED WE WERE SLAVES
...!
OH, SO THAT'S YOUR FOUNDER, TAKAZAWA!
TAKAZAWA DISCOVERED THE CHIP BURIED WITHIN A FELLOW DEPROGRAM-MER'S MIND
AND NOTICED HE ALSO HAD ONE IN HIS OWN MIND

I WILL ONE DAY BE YOUR MOSES!
THE LINCOLN OF THE DEPRO-GRAMMER WORLD!
IT WAS AN EXODUS!
That was the start af the free deprogram-mers.
WHOA, SO HE WAS LIKE MOSES, RIGHT!?
Takazawa and his friend escaped the organization together
and worked on removing each other's chips.

AND YOU MIGHT BE
THE LINCOLN WHO SETS ME FREE

UM, I'VE FORGOTTEN HIS NAME.
OH, THE MALE NURSE!
THAT'S SAKAI. IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S OUT RIGHT NOW.
OH.
BUT WE TALKED ABOUT GOING TO CHECK UP ON SORACHAI LATER.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO ALL THAT IF YOU'RE GOING TO GET EMBARRASSED.
THE SHEET WAS A NICE TRY AT MOSES.
You can stop now!
SO YOUR FOUNDER TAKAZAWA WAS ABLE TO REMOVE THOSE KEY CHIPS?
OH, NO.
YEAH, THE ONE COVERING THE SPECIAL CARE ROOM.

Is he just pretending not to know anything?
This kid...
Could he be with the washers who crashed me...?
isn't fully restored
My sensitivity
THAT'S RIGHT, YOU SAID HE WAS KILLED.
SO THE WASHERS CHASED HIM DOWN AND SNUFFED HIM OUT.
.....
WHOA
THAT'S WHAT YOU GOT FROM THAT?
THAT'S CRAZY! IT'S LIKE A HOLLYWOOD FLICK OR SOME HARD-CORE UNDERGROUND MOVIE!!
WHRRR

SO WERE BOTH OF THEM KILLED?
THE FOUNDER AND THAT ONE FRIEND OF HIS
...NO, ONE OF THEM IS STILL ALIVE.
THAT GUY——
THAT GUY IS MY——

WH-
OH
WHAT IS THIS!?
SSSS

CREAK
SORA-CHAI!
SORACHAI, EVACUATE THROUGH GATE E.
clunk
clunk
SORA!
THE PATIENT IS A DEPRO-GRAMMER.
Is that brat really a pawn of the washers!?

I REPEAT, EVACUATE AT ONCE.
THE PATIENT IS A DEPRO-GRAMMER.
This is no time for an exodus
Cough
Cough
Am I being put to sleep again?

Am I going to be terminated here and now!?

極彩魔術様解体屋

ウルトラバロック・デプログラマー

ultrabaroque deprogrammer